

Message Text

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12

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 EB-07 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-15 OMB-01 SAM-01 /089 W
----- 007251

R 041438Z AUG 76

FM AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8176

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

USMISSION USUN NY

UNCLAS JERUSALEM 1029

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS, ECON, IS, JO

SUBJ: WEST BANK ANTI-VAT STRIKE

REF: JERUSALEM 1003

1. SUMMARY: STRIKES PROTESTING EQUIVALENT OF VALUE ADDED TAX (VAT), CONTINUE IN MANY MAJOR WEST BANK TOWNS AUG. 4 DESPITE CALL BY ARAB CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE FOR AN END. MAYORS OF WB AND GAZA MET TO PROTEST IMPOSITION OF TAX AND SUPPORT CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE STAND. END SUMMARY.

2. ANTI-VAT STRIKES CONTINUED IN MOST WEST BANK TOWNS AUG. 4 EXCEPT BETHLEHEM, WHICH OPERATING NORMALLY, AND RAMALLAH, WHICH REMAINED ONLY PARTICALLY CLOSED. EAST JERUSALEM RETURNED TO NORMAL AFTER ONE-DAY SHUTDOWN AUG. 3 IN SOLIDARITY WITH WEST BANK TOWNS. ISRAELI RADION REPORTED THAT MILITANTS PREVENTED SOME SHOPS FROM RE-OPENING IN HEBRON AND THAT A FIRE WAS SET AT LABOR EXCHANGE IN TULKARM. DEMONSTRATIONS WERE ALSO REPORTED IN NABLUS.

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3. STRIKE ACTION TAKEN DESPITE CALL BY REPRESENTATIVES OF NINE OF LARGEST ARAB CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE, INCLUDING JERUSALEM, TO END STRIKE. STATEMENT ASKED CITIZENS NOT TO COOPERATE IN ADMINISTRATION OF TAX, BUT TO RETURN TO NORMAL ACTIVITY PENDING OUTCOME OF TALKS BETWEEN WEST BANK REPRESENTATIVES AND MILGOV.

4. MEANWHILE, MAYORS OF ABOUT 10 WB TOWNS AND GAZA REPORTEDLY MET IN NABLUS AUG. 3 TO STUDY QUESTION. THOSE ASSEMBLED EXPRESSED SUPPORT FOR DECISIONS OF CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE AND DREW UP LENGTHY PROTEST MEMORANDUM TO SEND TO ISRAELI DEFMIN.

5. COMMENT: CONTINUANCE OF STRIKE BEYOND AGREED PERIOD OF THREE DAYS AND DESPITE CALL BY CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE FOR ITS END INDICATES STRONG GRASS ROOTS INDIGNATION AND SURFACTING OF MORE MILITANT RESISTANCE.
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Message Attributes

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